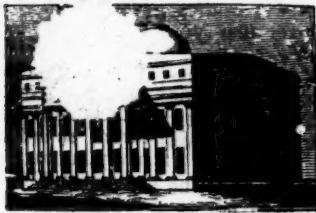


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MR. BOYLE'S LECTURE ON PHONOGRAPHY.

Mr. President and County Superintendents :

I have not, I trust, the vanity to thank you for the honor conferred upon *myself*, in inviting me to address you on a subject which is now exciting so much attention in the reformatory, and especially in the educational world. I have not yet done enough to merit such a flattering mark of esteem. I attribute your invitation to a much higher and more praiseworthy motive than mere personal consideration,—a desire to become somewhat familiar with the principles of a reform, which, if successful, will create a greater revolution in the world of letters than any other since the art of printing.

It having been suggested to me, by some of the Superintendents, that a lecture on Phonography would doubtless be called for during the sitting of the convention, I wrote to Mr. Andrews, desiring him to be present, that you might have from him a full and clear exposition of its character and claims. I received by return of mail, an answer from Mr. Andrews, stating his inability to be present with us, he having an appointment to lecture before a Committee of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences on Monday next, and for which he is now preparing himself. Under these circumstances, I have consented to appear before you, and while I regret the absence of my senior associate, believe me, gentlemen, that no endeavor on my part shall be wanting to make you feel his loss lightly.

Spoken language is a means by which man communicates with his fellow man. From various causes which it is not now necessary for me to detail, were I able to do so, it is not the same among all people. It is true that all nations use the lips, teeth, tongue, palate, nose and throat, in the generation and modification of the elementary sounds which compose the words of their respective languages; but the nature and number of these elementary sounds are not alike in all languages.

It must not be thought, however, that the fundamental difference existing between the various languages, and which renders the language of one people unintelligible to another, is caused solely by the existence of a few more sounds in one language than in another. Such a supposition would involve a fatal error, which, if not corrected, would materially impede the progress of the student, if it did not oppose an insuperable barrier to his acquirement of a philosophical knowledge of universal language.

There are in our own language, but seven or eight elementary sounds, (the precise number is not now important,) which are not to be found in the French language, and, on the other hand, the French have but few sounds which we do not possess.

In this, then, it will be asked, do the differences of a spoken language consist, or in what, us, what in reality have we who understand English to acquire before we can understand another spoken language containing the same, or nearly the same, elementary sounds as our own? I answer thus: The two or three extra elementary sounds found in the foreign language can be learned in a few minutes; but the *two great things* to be acquired are, first, a knowledge of every combination of sounds in the language, and next, of the *idea* or *object* which each combination is employed to represent.

To illustrate; there is in the French language, a word, a pronoun, *vous*. Now, two sounds compose this word; but they are not peculiarly French sounds, for they are heard in the English, Spanish, German and fifty other languages.

I know not, in fact, a language that does not contain them. The first sound is heard in the English word *vie*, and the next in the word *too*. What then has the American to learn of this word *vous*, as a French word? Simply, that two *sounds*, with which he is familiar in his *own* language, are combined by the French into a *word*, and that this *word* is used to represent the person or persons spoken to.

For fear that I may not be clearly understood, I will write on the blackboard the En-

lish words pleasure, arm, and key. Now gentlemen, if you will enunciate the sounds which the italicised letters (*s, a, k,*) in these words represent, you will discover that you are pronouncing the French word *Jacques*.

The fact that the elements of the combination are found in the three English words on the blackboard before you, proves that their combination into a word for the expression of an idea is alone peculiarly French.

Sometimes the same combination is to be found in many languages, but it does not necessarily represent in all these languages the same idea. The French word *qui* and the English word *key* contain the same sounds and are pronounced alike; the words *tout, tous,* (French,) and *to, too, two,* (English); *chou, choux,* (French,) and *shoe,* (English,) &c. &c., &c. But these words, or combinations of sounds, have different significations in the two languages.

My remarks, gentlemen, up to this time, are of course understood to apply only to spoken language, without any reference to the manner of representing it to the eye, or as it is commonly called, spelling it. The remaining portion of my lecture will be devoted nearly exclusively to printed or written language.

In the many thousands of languages and dialects on the face of the earth, as many as sixty elementary sounds cannot be discovered. This being the case, does it not strike you at once that it is an object of importance to classify these sounds, and to invent a character, to represent each one and one only, so that children may be taught this great alphabet of nature, and so enabled to read all languages written or printed in these characters with facility and certainty?

That the non-existence of an alphabet of nature, in which each letter shall represent but one sound and that uniformly, is the only thing that prevents us from pronouncing all languages correctly, and reducing the most barbarous unwritten dialects to some sort of order, is so obvious to every thinking man that illustrations from me would be superfluous.

I will proceed then, at once to point out to you the advantages of applying such a principle, (the Phonetic one,) to our own language.

Because we feel no trouble in reading words with which we are familiar by having seen them thousands of times in our lives, and which we have learned some years ago, we are apt to forget the intense labor with which we acquired the arts of reading and spelling, and to overlook the fact that every foreigner, however intelligent, and often, indeed, Englishmen and Americans, who see them for the first time, have the greatest difficulty in discovering what sounds they represent.

Let us look at some of the difficulties which children have to encounter, in learning to read and spell our language,—difficulties consequent upon the imperfections of the alphabet in present use.

Having mastered the alphabet, the child begins to learn words or combinations of letters,

when to its great surprise, *felt* if not expressed, it finds that not only do the letters represent other sounds than those which it has been taught to give them in the alphabet, but that not a single reason can be given for the capricious manner in which they are used throughout the language.

According to what rule has the letter *a* a different sound in each of the words *imagine, many, mate, father, fat, fall dollar?* Or the letter *o* a different sound in each of the words *woman women, lord, hop, work, son, go, do, compter?* Or the combination *eo* in the words *people, leopard, yeoman, galleon, feod, Me-Leod?*

Nor is there even method in this madness; for the simple sounds of our language may be represented in many different ways. The sound of *e* in the word *be*, for example, may be represented in *twenty-three* different ways; the sound of *a* in *mate*, in *twenty* different ways. The few simple sounds of our language are thus represented, or rather represented by upwards of *three hundred and ten* different signs and combinations of signs! On the other hand, the English letters and combinations of letters, used to represent simple sounds, have collectively no less than the enormous number of *five hundred and fifty-three* different values!!!

A foreigner who had never seen the word *scissors*, might write it in any one of *one million seven hundred and forty-five thousand two hundred and twenty-two* different modes, and in every case find authority in other words of the language to justify him for his use of each letter or combination.

So much has been said about such extravagant anomalies as *plough, tough, cough, hough, though, through, &c. &c.*, that many persons believe them, with perhaps a very few others, the whole of the orthographical absurdities of our language:—they are so accustomed to such anomalies as *to, so; put, but; love, rove, prove, her, here there; of, off; been, seen, &c. &c.*, that they forget the years of toil passed in thumbing over their spelling books to learn them.

There are, indeed, few who will not be startled at learning that there are not *sixty words* in the English language pronounced as they are spelled!! That is to say, the alphabetical name of each letter in the word furnishes no clue to its sound in a combination, or to the pronunciation of the words as a whole; so that the child or foreigner has to see and learn by a sheer effort of the memory, and as a distinct lesson, every word and syllable in the language. Hence, the consumption of four or five years valuable time in learning to read, and hence it is, that *nobody* ever learns to spell with uniform correctness. Yet, these whimsical combinations of letters are denominated "orthography," or "the just method of spelling words." Is not this somewhat like a caricature of printed language?

There are in the English language thirty-six simple sounds and six compound sounds, the constituted elements of which are so closely combined, as to make it more convenient for all practical purposes, to consider them sim-

ple,—making in all, forty-two. We have selected from the alphabet of nature, the forty-two characters representing these sounds. By such a change in our printed alphabet, the forty-two sounds of our language once learned, and the forty-two signs representing them, (the work of a few weeks) the child or foreigner can at once read and spell correctly any word in the English language.

And here, gentlemen, I beg to remind you, that I speak not only of what *can be*, but of what *has been* done. In the city of Providence I gave seventy hours' instruction to a class of four colored adults, who, when they began with me, did not know a letter of *any* alphabet. When these persons were examined in Boston, by a committee appointed for that purpose, they were said to have made more progress in the arts of reading and spelling, than pupils taught by the ordinary method generally make in two years.

Another feature of Phonotypy or the new system of printing, will not, I am sure, be regarded by you as unimportant. The Phonotypic alphabet is so constructed that those who have learned to read Heterotypy, or the old method of printing, can, in ten minutes learn to read Phonotypy fluently, their interests, as well as the rising generation having been consulted in the selection of characters. In fact, nearly the whole of the letters of the old alphabet have been retained; a few others have, of course, been added to them, to express sounds that occur in our language, but which, in the old alphabet, have no representatives; *e. g.*, the first sound in the word *all*, and the last sound in the word *do*. So much for Phonotypy, or printing by sound; but I cannot leave the subject without repeating an extract from a work by Mr. Ellis of England, a Fellow of the Cambridge Philosophical Society, and one of the most efficient leaders of the reform in Great Britain. He says:

"Let us shortly sum up the consequences of Heterotypy and Phonotypy being general.

At present, Heterotypy being in general use,

1. It takes years for a child to learn to read with tolerable accuracy.

2. It takes many more years before he is able to spell.

3. No one ever knows with certainty how to spell a word which he has only heard, and has not seen written.

4. No one ever knows with certainty how to pronounce a word which he has only seen, and never heard.

5. Very few can or do, at all times, spell every word with which they are familiar, both in speaking and writing, correctly.

6. Foreigners are continually committing the most ludicrous mistakes of pronunciation, from being misled by the spelling.

7. The irregularities of spelling are the great cause of the difficulty experienced in learning our language.

8. Missionaries to foreign countries find the greatest difficulty in reducing to writing the dialects of the barbarous tribes which they are endeavoring to civilize; and travellers and geographers seem quite at a loss for a means of conveying the names of places which they

have visited or described, the strange medleys of letters which they furnish, being in general ludicrously unintelligible.

If Phonotypy be generally used,

1. Children of six or eight years old will be able to learn to read in a week.

2. Those who can now read Heterotypy will learn to read in ten minutes.

3. No difficulty will be experienced in spelling any word which can be pronounced with accuracy.

4. No doubt will be experienced as to the proper pronunciation of any word which meets the eye.

5. Every one will be able to spell as correctly as he pronounces.

6. Foreigners will never be led into any errors of pronunciation by the orthography of words.

7. Our language, which is about the simplest, in its grammatical construction, of any in the world, will be rendered accessible to the whole of mankind, and will be much more extensively read and spoken.

8. Missionaries will be able to reduce the language of any tribe to an alphabetical form, and to print it off with ease; no language need be unwritten, no difficulty experienced in giving the names of places, &c. &c. All the immense variety of existing alphabets may be merged into one, and thus one great stumbling-block to the student of languages, (especially of Oriental language,) immediately removed.

9. Reading and writing will no longer be feats, their attainment being the end and aim which the parents of most poor children have in sending them to school; they will take their proper place as subsidiary arts, without which we can learn nothing, but which contain no learning in themselves;—they will be universally esteemed the *beginnings* and not the *ends* of education.

To conclude. Suppose we had not this "monkish orthography," but a better system, and some one were to propose the former, and show its beauties by the tables just given, would he not be scouted at for daring to propose what is evidently so absurd! And, are generations yet unborn to undergo the labor of wading through this mass of blunders, merely because we *now have* a bad system of spelling? Is this one argument, *it is so, and must therefore remain so*, to supersede all reason? Forbid it, common sense! "

I will now, gentlemen, endeavor to give you some idea of the difference between Phonotypy and Phonography, and to convince you of the necessity of having two alphabets; one for printing and another for writing.

After having mastered most of the absurdities of English orthography, and acquired the art of writing, do you not find that there is still something wanting; that your hand, do what you will, cannot keep pace with your ideas, nor even with the spoken language of a slow speaker? Why is this? We answer:—

1. You very often make from five to twenty movements of the hand in writing a single word, to represent actually no sound at all; the cha-

acters you form being called either silent or mute.

2. Two or three characters are often used to represent a simple single sound.

3. Every character in the English script alphabet is complex in its form;—we mean, that more than one motion of the hand is required to make each of them; e. g., *n, t, d, g, h, m, &c.*, so that if but *one* of these is used to represent a sound, a great many more motions of the hand are made to form it than are philosophically necessary. Let us take the word *though* as an illustration. To represent this word, which contains but two simple sounds, six complex characters are used, *t h o u g h*, requiring, in all, twenty-three motions of the hand to make them. While people persist in countenancing such absurdities, not only disguising instead of representing sounds, but wasting five-sixths of their time, and two-thirds of their paper, and performing six times more physical labor than the circumstances of the case require, the drudgery of writing will be felt and bitterly complained of.

A few moments' reflection will suffice to convince any person that characters adapted to a printing alphabet will not do for a script alphabet. Movable types being used in printing, the letters stand on the page necessarily independent of each other; that is, there is a space between each;—they do not touch one another. The printing alphabet has, therefore, been constructed, first, with reference to the practicability of using it according to our present mode of printing; secondly, with a reference to its similarity to that now in use, which will render the transition more easy, as any one who can read *Heterotypy* will be also able to read *Phonotypy*, and vice versa.

But in constructing a perfect system of written language, we should first ascertain what ought to be its essential characteristics, and then proceed to the formation of an alphabet with reference to the *whole* of the characteristics. You will, we are confident, agree with us that the following are the essential qualities of a perfect system of written language;—that it should be,

1. Easy of acquisition.
2. Easy of application.
3. Legible.

4. Capable of being written with as much rapidity as is possible without destroying its legibility.

Now, as all these are desirable characteristics, no system not possessing them all, will ever be received by the people into general use. If Phonography is not found to possess all these requisites, let the fact be established, and Phonography be either rejected or amended. Its supporters say that it is true to all these conditions of science. It is so simple, that all classes of persons can easily acquire it; it is perfectly legible, and is capable of being written by a practised hand even much *faster* than persons generally speak in public.

In order to comply with these conditions, a perfect alphabet of written language must possess, among others, the following properties.

1. Every simple sound must be represented by the simplest possible sign.

2. No sound must be represented by more than one sign.

3. No sign must represent more than one sound.

4. Sounds within a determined degree of likeness, should be represented by signs within a determined degree of likeness; and sounds beyond a certain degree of similarity must be represented by signs beyond that similarity: so that if in writing, a slight mistake is made, the misformed word will suggest the true one.

5. The consonant sounds being the significant meaning elements of speech, forming the frame of the words, should be represented by characters which can be easily joined together by the writer, without taking the pen from the paper before the form of the word is completed.

6. The vowel sounds, being merely the euphonic elements of speech, should be represented by characters placed near, but not joined to the consonant signs, so that when a word can be perfectly well recognized by its form without the necessity of using the vowel signs, these latter may be dispensed with, without destroying the legibility, impairing the beauty, or materially changing the appearance of the writing.

By examining the Phonographic alphabet you will perceive that it possesses the above characteristics. In Phonographic characters the word *though*, for example, is represented by two characters instead of six, because there are only two sounds in the word. Hence the astonishing rapidity with which Phonography may be written. Some Phonographers write more than *two hundred* words in a minute, while public speakers do not usually exceed *one hundred and twenty* words in a minute.

I hope, gentlemen, that the lateness of the hour when I began, will be deemed by you a sufficient excuse for the cursory view of the subject which I have been obliged to take. I do not flatter myself that I have made it appear to all of you, expedient, without further investigation, to introduce *Phonotypy* at once into general use; but that *Phonography*, as a perfect system of short hand, should at once be taught in our common schools is beginning to become the settled conviction of all thinking persons.

It is so desirable, that boys and girls on leaving school, should be able to follow a speaker without any difficulty and read each other's reports with as much ease as common print, that all classes of persons are favorable to its general adoption in our public and other schools.

I am sure, therefore, you will be pleased to learn that within a year it has been introduced into more than one hundred schools in the United States; among others, into the State Normal School at West Newton, Mass., and that teachers, in every State of the Union, are preparing themselves to teach it. The Principal of the Normal School of this State, and those members of the Executive Committee of that Institution who have examined it, are in favor of having it taught there, and are, I have reason to believe, making the necessary arrangements to that effect.

The School Commissioners of this city have voted that Phonography shall be taught by me for two months in the public schools; I have already commenced, and the attention of the scholars, and gentlemanly assistance of the teachers, make me feel confident that their progress will be such as to induce the commissioners to continue it as a regular branch of study—each school being taught by its own teachers.

You are about, gentlemen, to return to your respective counties; but there are two excellent journals in this State, devoted to the cause of Education, the District School Journal and the Teachers' Advocate; through them you will be able to learn whether Phonography becomes an established branch of study in the schools of Albany; if this takes place, and I see no reason to doubt it, it is unnecessary for me to remark to you that Phonography will have attained such a position in the educational world, as will entitle it at least to your most respectful consideration.

Although those among you who are interested in Phonography can acquire a theoretical and practical knowledge of it from books, yet as oral instruction very much facilitates the progress of the student of this, as of any other art or science, I take pleasure in informing you that great practical aid will be afforded you at the Teachers' Institutes in the fall, by the pupils of the Normal School, who will all, long before that, have become good practical phonographers.

I will conclude, gentlemen, by thanking you for your kind attention and the interest you manifest in this new educational movement; all I have to regret is, that circumstances have compelled me to bring the subject before you in *one* lecture, instead of *three*, or, that you have not been favored with a speaker whose powers of condensation are better than mine.

THE NATURAL SCIENCES.

REFLECTIONS ON CLOSING THE COURSE ON CHEMISTRY AND NAT. PHILOSOPHY AT THE TEACHER'S INSTITUTE in Delaware county, Oct. 30th, 1845: By Dr. R. L. WATERBURY.

The object of all science is the investigation of truth. He who made us placed within us the faculty of observation, the power of reasoning, and put us in a world where these things are necessary for our existence. We can labor, and He tells us that by the sweat of our brows we shall eat our bread. "He that *hath ears* to hear *let him hear*," and He has given us the ability to reason and has said, "Come now and let us reason together." The possession of an organ, then, implies the duty to use that organ. The investigation of truths establishes also the relations between them. There are cases in which one truth must of necessity follow another and be followed by a third—such connection is a chain of reasoning and must have for its foundation some notorious fact.

First truths cannot be demonstrated or proved by any chain of reasoning—such a truth is our individual existence. When of two truths the one is the continual predecessor of the other, the former we designate the cause, the latter

the effect. Of *ultimate* causes we know no thing, save the few glimpses of light which the Deity has vouchsafed to us—rays of Revelation from him who "rideth upon the cloud and maketh darkness a pavilion round about him." These rays are too bright for our intellectual vision and we cannot comprehend Him who is the "Father of all."

"Thou great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confined,
To know but this that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind."

A stone falls to the ground. A wise man asks *why*? A child may ridicule him and say it is the attraction of gravitation that is the cause of it. But what is gained? Merely a new *name* for an *effect*, and the wise one is the more ignorant of the two—for he is unconscious of his own insignificance. But you have heard that Sir Isaac Newton was a great man, and that he attained his greatness by the discovery of the attraction of gravitation. Newton knew no more of the *cause* of gravity than you or I—it was a deep research into the motions of falling things which enabled him to establish the law of gravity, to weigh the planets, to lay open in astronomy the eternity of the *future* equally with that of the *past*, and to build for himself a name which shall last as long as things fall and men ponder upon that fact.

Art is the application of science to useful purposes. Science is the head to conceive—art is the arm to execute. They are together in *emblems* as *sisters*. Science is the elder and it is her province to lead art, the younger. Science assumes that she is less liable to stumble and claims that art should follow—yet it must be confessed that the young romp often gets ahead, and frequently finds shorter and more eligible routes in which her elder sister is glad to travel. Yet they love each other, and their path is the same, and their journey is ever onward. Around them the forest falls, and the rays of the sun come in upon the bosom of the earth. Cottages spring up and flowers blossom. The neighboring woods echo to the ring of the anvil and the noise of the saw-mill, for the wild wood stream is dammed, and throbs like a great artery, with a flutter-wheel for a heart. Together they have done *wonders*. They have timed the arrows of light and have split the sunbeam into rainbows. They have marked out paths on the restless ocean and measured its tides. They have stolen from the moon the secret of her motion and betrayed the mystery of her eclipses. It is as though they had hung a pendulum to the clock work of the universe and registered its motion upon a dial. Science has chained the cloud and art has harnessed the puffing steed to their car. Science caught the lightning and art tied a letter to its wing; and as if all this were not enough, they have made messengers of rags, and given them tongues to tell of their deeds. Science and art were among the elder daughters of time—but almost within the last century, his wife, investigation, has borne to the old man a number of daughters, who are yet in their infancy. I refer to the *Natural Sciences*. They are a set of romping, rosy-cheeked brats, and are regarded by the sober elder members of the family as slightly

inclined to mischief—yet we must acknowledge that much allowance is made for their youth, and a commendable disposition is shown to foster them. Chemistry is one of these children, and though young, shows signs of a vigorous growth. Natural philosophy is one of the elder family, and has grown to years of discretion, though we have reason to believe that he has not yet finished his education. But to lay aside these “family matters”: Chemistry, as a science, dates back only to the doctrine of definite and multiple proportions. Before that time what was known on the subject was in the form of isolated facts, without any connecting links. The word Chemistry is of unknown origin. It was first found as *chemia*, indicating the art of making gold and silver among the Greeks and Egyptians, and was coupled by the Arabians, with the vain pursuit which it denoted, and passed into the European languages, with the Arabic prefix as alchemy. When the just powers of the science became known, it took again the term “*chemia*,” or chemistry. *Kames's Chemistry*, p. 10.

The elder philosophers recognized all things as composed of four elements, *fire, air, earth and water*. Poets have license to use the term elements in this sense, still. Milton speaks of “*Air and the elements*” as “*The eldest birth of nature's womb that in quaternions run,*” and then goes on to call on each one to praise its Great Author. At a later period arose the wild chimeras of the philosopher's stone, a jewel which should transform all the grosser metals into the nobler ones, and yet strange as was the pursuit, it gave birth to results which gradually laid the foundation for the science of chemistry. To this period is alcohol due, and as it was first obtained from wine, it was called by Europeans spirits of wine. The term “spirit” was given it from the fact that it was volatile and did not conform to their ideas of a body. In this way the term spirit came from metaphysics into chemistry, e. g. hydrochloric or muriatic acid was spirit of salt, i. e. salt was the body, the acid was its soul. Thick fluids obtained in this manner were “*oils*”; thus sulphuric acid was “oil of vitriol,” a name which it still retains, though entirely destitute of any oleaginous properties—and yet there seems to have been no system to their nomenclature, for instead of calling nitric acid “oil of nitre,” they named it aqua fortis, or brave water.

The family of vitriols were so called probably from their resemblance to glass. In the case of the salts they hit nearer, and the term is still used. Quick silver means living silver—and the term Mercury was probably given it as a compliment to astrology. In that way lead was dedicated to Saturn, and the name of the acetate in the old books is *saccharum Saturni*, or sugar of Saturn. The processes of the alchemists were to be conducted under certain relative positions of the heavenly bodies, and even their medicines were to be mixed at peculiar “times and seasons.” So the character R. which stands at the head of our physicians' prescriptions, is the emblem of Jupiter, and came by virtue of that to its place, though it now passes as the sign for *Recipe*. Even as late as Stahl, who died, I think, about 1734, the

doctrine of phlogiston or a general inflammable principle which pervaded all bodies, (too much of which in the human body was the cause of fever,) was generally believed, and taught by that eminent man. The *gases*, as a class of bodies, have only been known for less than a hundred years. But it was reserved for Lavoisier to marshal and arrange all these heterogeneous facts by his great doctrines of definite and multiple proportions. Chemistry was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep, when his spirit moved upon the face of the waters, and then, as in the sublime oratorio of Hayden, the most grating discord broke into rapturous harmony. Under the execrable tyranny of Robespierre, in 1794, Lavoisier fell a victim to the guillotine—unfortunate but not dishonored. He still lives,

“A light about his head all coming time shall shed.”

The present system of nomenclature followed close on this grand doctrine—and then the brilliant discoveries of Sir Humphrey Davy, within the present century, which have made the ground work of chemistry what it is. The science of natural philosophy is of a much earlier date. The term philosophy literally means a “lover of wisdom,” and philosophy in its broadest sense includes all the natural sciences. It was applied by the ancients more especially to metaphysics, or the science of mind, and ethics, or the science of morality. Such philosophers were Socrates and Plato.

Natural philosophy, or physics, is that science which investigates the properties of the material world. *Archimides* was among the earliest natural philosophers. When the city of Syracuse was besieged by Marcellus, he contrived cranes and pulleys by which he pulled up the prows of the ships of the enemy as they lay under the walls of the city, and suddenly loosing them, sunk them. With burning glasses he fired their vessels, and even boasted to king Hiero, that if he had a foothold for his machines, he would overturn this earth which we inhabit. Now it is a principle that the weight multiplied by the distance through which it moves shall equal the product of the power into the distance through which it moves. Suppose, then, a lever extended out in space for millions of miles, and suppose that a foothold had been found, and the braggart philosopher had taken a “bite” on this world so short that the third part of a circle traversed by each end of the lever should move the weight but one line or the one-twelfth part of an inch. Now imagine to yourself the sage transported through the regions of space to the extremity of the long arm of his crow bar, seated “*a la cheval*” upon it, and suppose his motion to have commenced two centuries before the Christian era. The force which moves him is a constant force, and the old dotard, as he clings to his machine, is dragged through the regions of space with a continually accelerated velocity. He has travelled for a score of centuries, and his vain errand still calls him onward, and this great lump of clay has not shifted its position by that fraction of an inch. Far preferable to his is the fate of the legendary German skeleton, annually dragged round the world by a patent cork leg. Those philosophers

among the ancients who meddled with physics, were prone to abstraction. Courses of reasoning were adopted to invalidate the evidences of the senses. They endeavored to prove that there was no such thing as motion—for, said they, "a body must move where it is or where it is not." Now if a body moves where it is, there is no change of place, and consequently no motion. That a body should move where it is not is absurd. The only man who refuted this doctrine by moving about the room was ridiculed as being unable to reason. The error is in the first position, for *motion is a change of place*. Admitting, for argument's sake, that there was motion, they endeavored to prove that there were no degrees of motion, taking the following as an illustration. The fleet-footed Achilles and a tortoise are to run a race. Achilles can run one thousand stadia while the tortoise is running one—give the tortoise then one thousand stadia the start—while Achilles is running this distance the tortoise runs one—while Achilles is running this *one*, the tortoise is running the one-thousandth part of another, and while Achilles is running this one thousandth part, the tortoise has run the one-millionth part of another; and so the tortoise will always be ahead by less than an assignable difference. But let us look at this reasoning a little. It proves too much for them. As it stands, Achilles has run over more ground than the tortoise, and in equal time, and consequently there must be degrees in motion. But give them their data, and let us change the order a little. While the tortoise has run *one*, Achilles has run a thousand—while the tortoise is running another, Achilles has run another thousand, and is nine hundred and ninety-eight stadia ahead. Like these things was the question, "When a body revolves does the centre of that body turn?" If you assume that it turns, then it is not the centre, as it must turn about some line or point which is the centre. On the other hand, if you assume that it does not turn, then it has no connection with that body and cannot be its centre. The fallacy here is in assuming that the centre of a body has dimensions—it has no dimensions, being merely a point or a line, and consequently conclusions drawn from that assumed fact, are false. Another: The material of our bodies is continually changing. You and I have not those bodies with which we came into the world. "Are we then the same persons?" You all answer, "Yes." You are conscious of that fact. Reasoning may only be adopted to prove those things to us of which we are not conscious, i. e. to make us conscious of them, and so I am not called on to prove our personal identity. This position has been ridiculed in this manner: "A miser had a pair of silk stockings, which, as they became worn, his daughter darned continually with worsted, till not a shred of silk was left. Now were these the same stockings?" How you may answer this question is a matter of very little consequence. But natural philosophy has not been always trammelled by such dogmas as these. There were men during the dark ages even, who kept alive the sacred fires upon the altar of truth; such men as Copernicus and Galileo, the apostles of science. They were bright and shining lights, and though they

flickered occasionally amidst the damp and darkness surrounding them, yet a few rays have struggled through and come down to us, and those rays are a "pillar of fire" round about them. By their lights the shadow of oblivion has fallen upon their persecutors and hidden them *all*, save those so dark as to be a shade even under that shadow. These men, too, possess earthly immortality; but their's is the immortality of darkness. So may it ever be with those who would fetter the divine form of truth, for each step that she leads us brings us a step nearer to the veiled throne of *Omniscience Himself*.

Within the last two centuries, natural philosophy has met a glorious resurrection. The great stone which had been rolled against the mouth of its sepulchre has fallen back, and the cere cloths and winding sheet of the jesuits have dropped from its limbs. Connected with this resurrection are the names of Newton, Watt, Fulton, Franklin, and a cloud of others. Its doctrines are the reverse of hate and strife, and its gospel brings, like that of the persecuted Nazarene, "*Peace on earth and good will to men.*"

I believe that the natural sciences ought to be introduced into our common schools, and I believe that they will be. It is but a short time since grammar, and still more lately geography, were introduced into the ground work of education, and they are now indispensable.

It is necessary for the farmer to know his soil, and to be able to adapt his manures and his crops to the character of that soil.

That which might be learned in days with books, is with him the reward of years of observation, and the companion of gray hairs. It is necessary for the mechanic to be acquainted with the laws of mechanics, and if a good workman, after much expense, he becomes so practically; but too often not till time has withered his muscles, and his intellect has become iron-bound by age. The machinist, after years of vexatious toil, frames for himself bungling rules, works round and round in the same circle for a few years, and then he and his rules "sleep and are buried with their fathers." This is not always the case, but in a vast majority of instances it is so. Let this evil be corrected. In our district schools let the useful come out in relief; let them furnish *heads* for farmers and mechanics and millwrights, as well as merchants and preachers and lawyers and doctors, and practice will shortly furnish them with *bodies*. The rush to the professions will be staid, and it will be more popular to *live* in the *body*, than to *starve* in the *head*.

Agriculture and manufactures are the bone and sinew of our country, and yet what have our district schools to do with either? Nothing, directly. Ladies and gentlemen, to you who are about to become teachers, I appeal in this matter. In you, more than in any other class, are shrouded the destinies of the country. Make yourselves familiar with the first principles of the natural sciences, and encourage your pupils on in the good cause. The community have been wronged by us in their cardinal interests, and like honest people let us endeavor to atone for that wrong. As to the best method of teach-

ing chemistry, natural philosophy, and the collateral sciences, as geology and botany, I know of no better methods than those adopted by the two literary institutions in our county. A black board is essential. On this not only illustrate yourself to the class, but teach each member to illustrate to the others. Make such experiments as your means will allow, and time will justify, before the class; and above all possess yourself a spirit of inquiry, and endeavor to instil it into the class. Cherish faculties of observation, for the most gigantic results have sprung from little things. The boiling of a tea kettle has brought the two continents within a fortnight of each other. The falling of an apple has weighed the solar system, and the twitching of a dead frog's leg has all but annihilated time. In point of intellectual ability, the inhabitants of this country are not inferior to any other. Born and bred among the rocky fastnesses of our eternal hills, our character as a people is moulded by these circumstances. We are a hardy, industrious race, and among such people and in such a country, the diamonds of human intellect are found.

In rough bosoms we carry warm hearts; we worship our liberty. Liberty is the story of the mother to her infant—the rivers murmur it—the winds whisper it—the rustling leaves echo it, and gray headed old men spend long winter evenings in telling the young what it cost.

So we become the sworn enemies of oppression, and so, when false hearted demagogues came among us, and in its sacred name called on us, our very virtues became our bane. This is the material on which as teachers you are to work—the school books are your tools and you are the potters who shall mould the clay. Do not think, then, you are stooping in twining the tendrils of the young mind. In the district schools of this county there are germs of intellect which may be destined to glow in the Senate—to move the wheels of the great moral world—to be lights in science, or to strike with a master's hand the wizzard chords of song. "Men who," in the words of an eminent man of our day, "shall make the hearts of future generations leap at the words they have uttered, the deeds they have done."

There is a literature even among children, and the features of this literature are perpetual—they pass on from generation to generation. Who of us has not read the history of Robinson Crusoe, or has not wondered at the story of mother Hubbard and her wonderful dog? Even in these little things there is an immortality of idea as well as of words.

He who contrived the story of the five pigs told over babies' toes, did a greater work than the writer of ephemeral folios which were long since forgotten. That was a perpetuity of idea, this was a mere stringing of words together. The studies which we have been pursuing for a few days suggest some further reflections. Time is an element of all earthly affairs. By this we measure every change. An idea of time cannot exist without an idea of change, for we measure time by change. A successive change of idea measures time with our minds. Successive changes of position in the hands upon the dial, measure time with clocks, and successive jour-

neys round the sun measure time with worlds. As change implies time, so it argues limited duration of condition. The tiny arm of the infant grows larger and stronger through childhood and youth, but that very change implies that it shall become palsied by age. Last spring the trees budded and then put forth leaves—the winds fanned us gently and the sun smiled upon us—birds warbled and butterflies fluttered—but those changes implied an end to all those things. They have all passed away, and autumn winds are whispering their requiem.

There are seasons of the year, and these seasons mark off the existence of living beings, animals and plants. The period of man's existence is sufficiently long for him to comprehend these things. One generation passes away, and another comes in its place. But we find this great element of change existing in inorganic nature. It is going on among the worlds. Stars have burned with a brighter flame, which has grown lurid, then flickered with an ashy hue and gone out forever. The finger of time is at work on this earth too. Mountains are sliding down, and valleys are being filled up, and change is written upon the brows of the "Eternal Hills" in characters as legible as the wrinkles upon the brow of the old man. Who then shall say that the present order of things on this earth is perpetual? These wrinkles are the evidences of mortality, and who shall assume that those marks are not evidences of a coming dissolution of the present order of nature? But let us take a step farther. This great law of change is not only universal, it is immutable, it is perpetual. The author is he in whom is no "variableness nor shadow of turning," so that which might at first seem to militate against one of his attributes, is but the fruit of that attribute.

But we have also seen in these studies, that no particle of matter can cease to exist—that though changes in form are continually taking place, yet the absolute quantity of matter remains always the same. This observation applies to us. We have all of us had friends—friends who have died. How fondly we have watched over their dying pillows. How we feared, yet hoped, till hope fled, and the awful truth darkened our hearts, that they were dying. And then, when the first gush of agony was over with us, we saw the eye fade, the lips slowly part, and the cold sweat of death stand in dew-drops on the brow as exhausted nature made one effort more to fasten her hold on life—longer and longer were the intervals of breath—the heart fluttered like a caged dove against its prison walls—the pulse ceased at the wrist—another gasp for life, and the heart but trembled when it should have beat, and the flame died out forever from its socket. And this too was but a part of the great order of nature. While their bodily forms were as when they left us, kind friends put them away in the ground, lest decomposition should mar the image daggerretyped in the inner temple of our hearts.

Now the same elements which formed their bodies, by Dalton's law of the diffusion of gases, are in the air and from that are organized by the light of the sun into plants. Our friends then nod to us in the lilies, or blush in the vio-

lets that garnish their graves. Plants are the food of animals, and in this way the same elements of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen and hydrogen serve organized beings for bodies, as this earth serves successive generations for a habitation.

You and I are conscious that we exist—may we exist separately and independently from this body? The materials of which *these* bodies are composed, were not of our bodies a few years ago, and yet we are the same; nay further, we may lose a limb or all our limbs, and should be the same beings; yet, still further, we may lose some faculty of our mind, (as memory is often lost in old people,) yet we still have our personal identity. Every man then, whatever he may say, actually believes in his own mental identity—that he is a *something* more than a mere piece of clay, and that *something* is himself. Now shall annihilation pertain to nothing in the material world, and yet be an attribute of God's last and noblest work? to whom He has manifestly put all others in subjection?

There is a limit to the existence of man as individuals: while as a species, men have existed since their creation. Each one has held his body but a limited period of time, for nature has taken it from him, and clothed in it his successor. There is a mystery in this mortality. Does all this go on in a circle of *life and death*, and is there no progression? Or is this world but an embryo existence preparatory to another? A nursery of immortal spirits to be transplanted to bud and blossom in a more elevated scale of being? Worms spin round themselves winding sheets and die, and are born into another state of existence. Does life revisit these worms—and is death to man an eternal sleep? Or is it too the birth into a new state of being,"

"It is not all of life to live,
Nor all of death to die."

It is not the intention of these observations to draw away your attention from the great truths of Revelation. They are made to vindicate these sciences from the charge of having sceptical tendencies.

Compared to the revealed wisdom of God, all human wisdom "loses, discountenanced, and like folly shows."

The Bible is the

"Star of eternity—the only star
By which the bark of man can navigate
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss."

And now, as we are about to part, allow me to express a hope that the few days we have spent here, have passed happily; and that each one of us may return to our homes wiser and better than we came, and prepared to engage again with renewed ardor in the business of life. We too, as a class, are subject to this great law of change, and if another change should bring us together at some future period, I hope to meet you under such circumstances as shall give me ability to do more and better than I have done—for your sakes.

"All men, even the vicious themselves, know that wickedness leads to misery; but many even among the good and wise, have yet to learn that misery is almost as often the cause of wickedness.—*R. Southey.*

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

Our readers will remember the interest excited in the philosophical and mechanical circles of this city, when it was announced, some time since, that Mr. John W. Starr, then a resident of Cincinnati, had discovered the mode by which electricity might be applied to the illumination of cities and public buildings. Competent judges were sanguine that the heroic and self-sustained efforts of the inventor would be appreciated and rewarded under any test or scrutiny. He was encouraged to proceed immediately to Europe, and place himself in communication with those whose unfavorable verdict would only suggest to him the necessity and the means of removing all obstacles to the consummation of his idea, but the fiat of whom, if in favor of the "Patent Electric Light," would immediately give it authenticity and success. It was a bold step, but as we are glad to announce, is justified by the event. We received by the *Hibernia* "The Mining Journal and Atmospheric Railway Gazette," published in London, and which is devoted to scientific progress and discovery, and the leading article of the last number is on the subject of this new discovery. The Journal gives the specification at length, with an illustrative cut, and appends the following remarks.—*Cincinnati Herald.*

"The application of electricity to the purposes of illumination must rank as one of the great achievements of the age. The experiments of Sir Humphrey Davy showed that the most intense light could be produced by the passage of an electrical current across an interval between two charcoal points; but from the impossibility of making it continuous, it was of no practical use. It is remarkable that, although the subject has engaged the attention of scientific men from that time to the present, their experiments have been made on the same principle—that of the discharge from one point or pole to the other, called by electricians the disruptive discharge. They have tried pole formed of different substances, worked them into cylinders, disks and other shapes, and enclosed them in vacuum—but without success; as the particles were invariably torn off and dissipated by the intense heat generated, and powerful force exerted, at the point of discharge. Public experiments on this principle have been made on the Place de la Concorde, Paris,—and the results, tho' highly satisfactory as to the power of the light, did not prove that it could be sustained for any useful length of time.

The various suggestions which have from time to time appeared, as to the application of electric light to different purposes, have evidently originated with those unacquainted with the great obstacle to its practical use. The difficulty is entirely overcome by the novel and important invention of Mr. John W. Starr, patented by Mr. King. It will be perceived, from an examination of the specification, that Mr. Starr avails himself of an entirely different principle from that hitherto employed. This principle is the ignition of a continuous conductor so arranged that an extended surface is presented glowing with the most brilliant light.

By this means the quantity of light may be increased without affecting its constancy—a result the very opposite to that which is obtained by the disruptive discharge; as the destruction of charcoal, or other material, goes on with corresponding rapidity as the light is enlarged.

"Among the novel results obtained, is the very curious and important one which the inventor has repeatedly demonstrated by accurate photometric measurement—that the light is as the square of the intensity of the current; or in other words, if the current from a battery of a given number of cells produces a light equal to twenty candles, double the number of cells will produce the light of eighty candles. This law will be of great advantage when the invention is worked on an extensive scale. With regard to the source of electricity, although the voltaic battery may be used, the magnet is on many accounts to be preferred; and the result of a great number of expensive experiments has shown that, except in a portable apparatus, which is to be used for submarine lighting, and for the exploration of dangerous mines, the magnetic battery, from its simplicity, constancy, and economy, requiring only a small amount of mechanical power to keep it at work, is greatly superior. Of the advantages of this mode of lighting, it is hardly necessary to speak. The safety, cleanliness, and brilliancy of the electric light, combine to make it superior to every other artificial light."

We have also Birmingham papers, containing the proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Institution of that city on the 11th ult. from which we take the following:

"Mr. G. Shaw briefly addressed the audience upon the nature of voltaic electricity, which he illustrated by a number of exceedingly beautiful experiments, and concluded by exhibiting a model of the new electric light invented by Mr. Starr. He stated that this invention furnished the means of applying electricity to the illumination of buildings, &c., and that the permanent magnet would be employed as the source of electricity, which reduces the expense of the small amount of mechanical power required to keep the armatures in rotation. The steadiness and brilliancy of the light were greatly admired by those present, as was evidenced by the warm applause with which it was received; and as this was, as we learn, the first occasion of its public exhibition, it has attracted attention."

These extracts are an honorable tribute to unpretending but courageous genius, and, as another illustration of the artistic and mechanical skill of Cincinnati, will justify our indulgence in a feeling of local pride. The invention which receives such high encomiums from sources so competent to judge—praise from the praised—was the slow result of long and patient toil, but lit in all its weary stages by the light of youthful hope, a steadier if not so brilliant a lustre as that which finally was evolved as the consummation of skill and enterprise. We cannot repress an expression of pleasure and gratulation.—*Eve. Post.*

Reports of County Superintendents.

CATTARAUGUS COUNTY.

Hon. N. S. BENTON, Supt., &c.

Sir—In addition to the facts contained in the statistical tables required by the department, I beg leave to submit the following report:

VISITING SCHOOLS.

I have visited during the last year one hundred eighty-six school districts—one hundred seventy-three of them twice, and seventeen, for special reasons, three times. Thirty-nine I was not able to reach while their schools were in progress. These schools were examined in respect to the subordination of the scholars to good discipline—whether order and submission to government was maintained with, or without, corporal punishment—the teacher's qualifications and ability to teach—the progress of the pupils in the various branches taught—the moral character of the scholars as respects the habit of profane swearing—quarreling—telling of falsehoods, &c., &c.

Such advice and suggestions as occasion seemed to require were faithfully given to teachers, scholars and patrons. Some improvements in the mode of teaching, especially a new method of teaching orthography upon the blackboard, have been introduced into the schools and readily adopted by most of the teachers. The method of teaching orthography referred to, being a complete analysis of the elementary sound of the language, (differing somewhat from Mr. Wright's, which I have since seen being adapted to Sanders' rules,) is thought by town superintendents and others to be a labor-saving improvement. No difficulty has been met in arousing and exciting to vigorous action the scholar or the teacher; but it is otherwise with a portion of the community, and I am sorry to add with some of the school officers. Whether my services in visiting schools has been beneficial or otherwise, is not for me to say. But this I can confidently say, that I have shunned no labor, early or late, "in season or out of season," but have faced the storms for the last four years, whether rain, hail, or snow, with a full determination to discharge as far as able the important trusts committed to my care.

PUBLIC EXAMINATION.

Our public examinations have increased in interest. The recitations have been more extensive as well as more intellectual. I am still of opinion that these examinations operate successfully in elevating the character of both teachers and scholars. They are the only means I have yet been able to devise to enlist, to any considerable extent, the sympathies of the public.

QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

Most of the teachers are rapidly improving in their qualifications for cultivating more successfully the moral and intellectual faculties of the scholar. Those in particular who intend to make teaching a permanent business, avail themselves of every facility within their control, for elevating the character and advancing the usefulness of their calling. A few quacks, however, are still itinerating about the county. They may be found sometimes in one part, then in another, and so on—aiming, it would seem, to avoid, if possible, coming in contact with their own reputations. They would meet with little success if trustees would abandon the pernicious practice of hiring teachers before they have been examined by the proper authority. Every state superintendent for years, I think, has cautioned trustees against the practice; but it still prevails. I am of the opinion that it should be ab-

olutely prohibited; for I have known a number of instances where teachers have confidently recommended themselves, or employed some interested friend to trumpet their fame, and have been hired at high wages, and then studiously avoided an examination till after commencing their schools, or at about the time of commencing them. The town superintendents discovered that their qualifications, to say the least, were very meagre, but it was too late to supply their places with good teachers. They got their licences from the necessity of the case, and the miserable results need no description.

LIBRARIES.

In consequence of being obliged to visit (when possible) three schools in a day, I have seen only a part of the libraries. Those seen are read more, especially by the young, and are better taken care of than formerly. It is true, however, that these rich, intellectual stores, are not properly appreciated by all. I am not able to give the average circulation in the county. Several districts have availed themselves of the provisions of the law, and applied their library money in purchasing maps, globes and other apparatus. Whether this investment will be of more permanent benefit to the districts than purchasing books, is doubtless problematical.

TEXT BOOKS.

Immediately after the appointment of the town superintendents, a convention was called for the purpose of examining and recommending a catalogue of uniform text books, but there was not a majority of the towns represented, and the catalogue was never published. Similar efforts have been made every year since, with about the same success. Some town superintendents, I am informed, think it not their duty to attend county conventions, because they are not required to do so by law, or by a special order of the department. I also understand that some boards of town auditors doubt the legality of charges made for time spent in this service. And it is said that "works of supererogation" have been considered a sufficient cause for superseding several very efficient superintendents, even where they have done much of their labor at their own expense. Under these circumstances, having but little concert of action, we have not succeeded to our own satisfaction, in correcting the time-destroying evil, growing out of the use of improper and diversified text books. We have done what we could, but have not done all that is necessary. My settled opinion is, that the town superintendents should be organized into a permanent board of education for the county; should meet semi-annually, "compare notes," devise "ways and means" to improve their schools, and publish to the people a detailed report of the actual and comparative condition of the schools in the several towns. I submit this as my own opinion. It may pass for what it is worth.

EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS.

I have given county licenses to four male and three female teachers, all of them experienced, and I believe successful teachers. No county licenses are given to any, whatever may be their literary acquirements, until they have been visited in the school room, and their ability to govern and to teach fully examined. I have also granted eleven temporary town licenses.

APPEALS.

Since the law has required appeals to be primarily brought to the county superintendent, I have been favored with a great number. Believing, as I do, that the future welfare of the districts requires these matters to be satisfactorily settled

among themselves, I have made it a rule never to decide a case, until all efforts have failed to produce a settlement. The result is, I have had to record but one legal decision during the last two years.

BUILDING OF SCHOOL HOUSES.

Since our last report we have built twenty-one school houses. Most of them are good, substantial, well seated and well arranged buildings. Some are of a superior class. When it is considered that the county is comparatively new—the inhabitants in moderate circumstances, laboring under a heavy land-debt, which is continually drawing upon their means for the annual interest, it must be conceded, we think, that, in this respect, Cattaraugus has done well. If any other county, all things considered, has done better, let the fact be published, and we will "try again." A few districts merit particular notice. Joint district No. eight (Conewango and Ellington) have purchased a fine site in the village of Clear Creek, and have built an elegant house with two apartments. It is an ornament to the village, and tells well for the enterprise and intelligence of the inhabitants. It is hoped that they will reap a rich reward for their labor and expense in the superior intellectual and moral improvement of their children. District No. one, Randolph, (west village,) have built a house at an expense of more than six hundred dollars. The plan is somewhat novel, but it is a good one. It has a basement story of stone-work, designed to be used for a wood house, &c. Large squares upon each wall of the school room are done off with a hard finish, to be used instead of black boards. The floor is laid double, with a space of seven inches filled with tan bark. The design of this is to prevent noise. They have a beautiful site, containing half of an acre of land. Randolph has been distinguished for sustaining good schools; they are now entitled to the credit of having the "second best" school house in the county. Joint district No. 1 (Persia, Perrysburgh and Collins) have purchased two and a half acres of land for a site, in the village of Lodi. It is usually called "the pine grove," and is one of the most interesting and beautiful localities in the world. They have built a house with three apartments upon the ground floor, and a large lecture room in the second story. In the style of the architecture,—in the plan of the house—and in many other particulars, it excels any other school house that I have seen in western New-York. I have not been able to learn the whole cost, but I presume that it is between sixteen hundred and two thousand dollars.

All which is respectfully submitted.

E. A. RICE,

Co. Superintendent Catt. Co.

East Otto, Sept. 24, 1845.

ROCKLAND COUNTY.

Hon. N. S. BENTON, Sup't. Com. Schools:

Accompanying the abstracts herewith transmitted, the undersigned, in obedience to law and the instructions of your department, respectfully adds the few following observations.

On account of much sickness in my family I was unable to visit the schools during the past winter, and consequently cannot report to you their condition, as required.

The schools have all been visited by me, during the year, once, and a number of them, twice. In these visits I have been accompanied by the town superintendents in their respective towns, with but few exceptions.

The number of districts, during the past year, has somewhat increased, by the organization of two new districts, and the reorganization of two

others, which have neglected to report for several years past, and were without a school house. I think I can now with truth say, that there is not a family in Rockland, whose residence is not within two miles of some district school house.

The want of education never was more visible to the people than at present. Its force is now just beginning to be felt. The excitement, which was so warmly agitated in this county during the last fall, has succeeded admirably in waking up the public mind to the importance of educating the people not only, but devising means for the accomplishment of so worthy an object. And were I called upon now to venture my opinion upon the probable conclusion to which the majority of the opposition have arrived, I could not but say, that they are favorable to the *main features* of our present system, in comparison with the system as administered at any period previous to its present organization.

It is not my object nor yet my wish to discuss the subject, yet I must here declare, that the public mind is rapidly verging towards a system of free schools, where a thorough English education shall be provided for every individual at the expense of the property of the people. It is the only system which is calculated effectually to secure a proper education to the masses, and under it a perfect and permanent safeguard to the free institutions of our country. That the scheme is practicable and salutary in the end to be attained, to wit, the affording of a proper education to all, a complete preparation for all the social and civil relations of life, I need only refer you to the public schools of the city of New-York, whose character is not only daily progressing, but whose present condition will vie with that of any others in the state. The popular feeling of Rockland county is now on the side of free schools.

One of the greatest impediments to the advancement of our schools, under the present system, is the number of boards of examination of teachers and the different grades of qualification demanded by the different boards for the same schools. For example, the county superintendent, anxious to elevate the standard of education in our schools, requires the possession of such qualifications by the teacher as will secure to him and his school, not only respectability, but will make this very respectability, as well as that which brings it, operate as an incentive to progress. The town superintendent, aware that his certificate, as to its respectability, is of an inferior grade, and that its validity is limited to one year only from its date, is almost involuntarily induced to conform to a minor standard of qualifications. Hence the town superintendent is always resorted to by those teachers who know that their qualifications are insufficient. And does the present system, under which our schools are organized, afford two different grades of schools for these two different grades of teachers? No. They step out, side by side, and are alike ready to be employed by the trustees of the different districts. This is an evil, whose influences are discouraging to the active efforts of those, who zealously prosecute, and endeavor to promote the welfare of the common schools of our state. It is one of the most serious impediments to their prosperity which our present system can be charged with.

It is deemed unnecessary to present to you, at this time, a discussion of the various topics which are commonly referred to, in our annual reports. Suffice it to say that there is a gradual advancement towards a higher and more effective standard of instruction in our common schools; and although in some districts, the happy evidences of

this are scarcely if at all to be seen, in others they are presented to the returning visitor with redoubled power, and kindle emotions of pleasure and pride, which, in return, incite to renewed and more vigorous efforts in their behalf.

We trust we are not enthusiastic, when we say, that there is nothing to stop their progress, until they arrive at that point, at which the very nature of our free institutions requires that they should be. The time is coming, when education will not be looked upon as an inheritance, bequeathed by a father to his children, for the purpose of elevating them, and securing to them wealth; but as a common necessary for all, provided by the state for its safety, and for the security of peace, prosperity and happiness to all her citizens. In a country like ours, where the people rule, they must be qualified to rule; and, in order to be qualified, they must be intelligent and virtuous.

NICH'S. C. BLAUVELT,

Co. Sup't. Rockland Co.

Clarkstown, Oct. 22, 1845.

A BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT.

ON a fine summer day in 1840, a clergyman was called to preach in a town in Indiana, to a young Episcopal congregation. At the close of his discourse he addressed his young hearers in some such words as these; "Learn that the present life is a preparation for, and a tendency to, eternity. The present is linked to the future throughout creation, in the vegetable, in the animal, and in the moral world. As is the seed, so is the fruit; as is the egg, so is the fowl; as is the boy, so is the man; and as is the rational being in this world, so will he be in the next; Dives estranged from God there; and Enoch walking with God here, is Enoch walking with God in a calm and better world. I beseech you, then, live for a blessed eternity. Go to the worm that you tread upon and learn a lesson of wisdom. The very caterpillar seeks the food that fosters it for another and similar state; and more wisely than man, builds its own sepulchre, from whence in time, by a kind of resurrection, it comes forth a new creature, in almost an angelic form. And now, that which was hideous is beautiful, and that which fed on comparatively gross food, sips the dew, and revels in the rich pastures, an emblem of that paradise where flows the river of life, and grows the tree of life. Could the caterpillar have been diverted from its proper element and mode of life, it had never attained the butterfly's form and hue; it had perished a worthless worm. Consider her ways and be wise. Let it not be said that ye are more negligent than worms, and that your reason is less available than their instinct. As often as the butterfly flits across your path, remember that it whispers in its flight, 'Live for the Future.'" With this the preacher closed his discourse; but to deepen the impression, a butterfly, directed by the hand which guides alike the sun and an atom in its course, fluttered through the church, as if commissioned by heaven to repeat the exhortation. There was neither speech nor language, but its voice was heard saying to the gazing audience—"Live for the Future."—*Albany Spectator.*

A soft answer turneth away wrath.

District School Journal.

S. S. RANDALL, Editor.

ALBANY, JULY, 1846.

THE FREE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

THE practical evils growing out of the present system of defraying the expenses of common school instruction over and above those provided for by the public fund, by rate bills and tax lists, consist chiefly in the *time* and *labor* gratuitously required to be expended by trustees and other officers of school districts in assessing, levying and collecting these rates, and in the *inequality* and not unfrequently *burdensome nature* of their imposition. The teacher is required to keep an exact list of the number of children in attendance from each family of the district, and the number of days attendance of each, which at the expiration of the school term he is required to verify and deliver to the trustees. They are then to meet together, and after satisfying themselves of the authenticity and correctness of the list so kept by the teacher, and ascertaining the amount due for his services, they are first to deduct from this amount the proportion of public money assigned to the term by previous vote of the district, or otherwise, and then to apportion the balance of the teachers' wages among those who have sent to school, according to the number of days and of children sent by each, as they appear on the teacher's list. They are then to exempt from the payment of their share of the bill so made out, either wholly or in part, as they may deem expedient, all the indigent inhabitants of the district who have sent their children to the school, and who in their judgment are unable, for any reason, to meet their school bills—to make out and file with the district clerk a certificate of such exemption, and to levy the same on the taxable property of the district generally. Having gone through with all these preliminary steps, they annex their warrant to the rate bill, and deliver it to the collector, who is entitled to five per cent in addition, as his fees on the amount collected and paid over by him. When collected, the proceeds are paid over to the teacher, and he is furnished with a draft on the Town Superintendent for the share of public money appropriated to the term, accompanied by a certificate of his employment, that he is legally qualified, and entitled, under his contract with the Trustees, to receive the sum for which the order is drawn.

Now from this recapitulation of the process of making out and collecting a rate bill for the payment of teachers' wages—a process which is required to be repeated three or four times in the course of each successive year by the teacher, trustees and collector, of upwards of eleven thousand school districts—it is obvious at a glance

that much valuable time is consumed—that each of the individuals and officers here enumerated, amounting in the aggregate to nearly *sixty thousand* persons, is subjected to a needless and vexatious burden; and when to this is added the constant and almost unavoidable liability to errors, mistakes and consequent personal liability and pecuniary loss, and the unequal and frequently arbitrary operation of the system of exemptions, is it not, on every account, desirable that a more simple, less burdensome, and more equal mode should be adopted, even though its expense in the aggregate, should exceed that of the one which now prevails?

Any individual at all conversant with the practical operation of the existing system, can readily refer to instances of frequent occurrence, where parents in comparatively indigent circumstances, but with large families of children of suitable age for common school instruction, are virtually compelled to keep their children at home, either from the capricious refusal of trustees to exempt them, wholly or in part, from the payment of their share of the rate bill, or from an unwillingness, growing out of an honest feeling of pride, to claim such exemption.

There is another mode, also, by which the expenses of the school are, in many instances, greatly enhanced by those who avail themselves of its privileges, and for which no adequate remedy can be devised under the present state of things. The term commences under the most flattering auspices, and the school is filled up with the children of the district. Soon, however, difficulties begin to be started—the teacher does not meet the expectation of some of his employers—the children first of one family and then another are gradually withdrawn—dissensions ensue—and before the term finally closes, the school has, perhaps, dwindled down to a mere fraction of its original size. Had the attendance been constant and regular, the rate bills would have been trifling—while under existing circumstances—circumstances over which those who have persisted in sending their children to school, could have exercised no possible control—the factious and discontented portion of the district who have virtually succeeded in breaking up the school, and paralyzing its capacity of usefulness, are charged in the rate bill only for the time they have actually sent—leaving those who have been the uniform and steady supporters of the school to pay a greatly augmented sum, and to sustain the chief burden of its maintenance. These are cases of frequent occurrence in the country districts; and their tendency is unfavorable in the extreme to the welfare and prosperity of the schools. A premium is, in fact, held out for their desertion: and amid the prevalence of district controversies and dissensions arising out of the local administration of the system, no rea-

dier or more effective mode presents itself to the respective combatants of annoying each other, than by thus skilfully transferring the pecuniary burden of the school to the shoulders of those who, while perhaps they may be the most desirous of availing themselves of the benefits of education thus placed within the reach of their children, are the least able to defray its increased expenses.

The only adequate remedy for these pervading evils is, we are convinced, to be found in the adoption of an enlightened system of **FREE SCHOOLS**, to be supported at the public expense, from the public funds, and from the taxable property of the community generally.

THE TEACHER, AND HIS MISSION.

Among the clearest and most heart-cheering indications of the rapid advancement of a Christian civilization, the growing appreciation of the office and functions of the **TEACHER**, demands special and grateful recognition. Not many years have elapsed since, in a very large proportion of our cities and villages and towns, the standard of qualification required for the instructor of youth in our elementary schools, seldom exceeded that which any individual of ordinary intellectual capacity, could not well fail of possessing, even in the absence of any mental or moral culture beyond such as circumstances and accidental associations might confer. The merest smattering of learning—the slightest pretensions to ability, however superficial and empty—accompanied with a little assurance, and an offer to afford his services at a sufficiently low price—were adequate to insure such temporary employment as the exigencies of the candidate required, to enable him to secure the necessary funds for the accomplishment of whatever ultimate object he might have had in view. This state of things has virtually passed away. A more enlightened conception of the means and uses of education—a clearer view of its capabilities for the expansion and elevation of our whole nature—a more just appreciation of the responsibility and solemnity of the trust confided to the teacher, have already effected a radical change in public sentiment in this respect; and the time is at hand when those whose mission it is to educate the youth of our land, must be set aside and consecrated to their high and holy task by the devotion of years of intellectual and moral preparation for its duties. For a high and holy task it is to mould the mental faculties of an immortal being—to give the first great and irrevocable impulse to that noble machinery of mind and spirit, which is destined to revolve in an orbit of eternal space and duration—to stamp the ineffaceable impress upon the heart and the life, of principles and motives which are to regulate all future action—animate all future will—and leave their abiding traces upon all future revolutions of the wheels of time.

Were it possible for the teacher to communicate to those confided to his charge, a clear, accurate and comprehensive knowledge of the principles of science without deviating to the right or to the left, in aught that concerns moral culture—could such a division of his labors be devised as that the cultivation of the intellect alone should devolve upon him—while the opening blossoms of the heart should be watched and cherished by paternal affection, and such other ministries as the institutions of society might afford—then, indeed, his task, though laborious and deeply responsible, would involve in it no other elements than such as he might easily subject to his control. But, constituted as the world is, this is wholly impracticable; no such arbitrary boundary between the mental and moral universe exists. The child, with his whole nature, is placed under the temporary direction and control of the teacher; and no portion of this nature can with impunity be neglected. It is the teacher's duty, first of all, to become acquainted with the mental structure of each of his pupils; and in order to do this, with any approximation to accuracy or success, he must have familiarized himself with the fundamental elements of the philosophy of the human mind. He cannot expect to deal wisely with that which he does not himself understand. He cannot intelligently and faithfully develope and direct those faculties, the nature and appropriate functions of which, in the economy of the mental and moral organization, have not been clearly revealed to his own consciousness. He cannot trace the operation and effect in the minds of his pupils, of those principles, the laws and analogies and functions of which have never adequately been comprehended by himself.

If, as is now beginning to be generally understood among the highest class of thinkers and reasoners, the phenomena of the intellectual and moral faculties appertaining to humanity are developed in accordance with principles and laws operating with the same certainty, system, uniformity and order which characterize every other department of the universe, these principles and laws must be capable of being, to a very considerable extent, at least, comprehended and known; and those whose peculiar function it is to assist in, supervise and direct this development, are morally bound to acquaint themselves, by observation, by reflection, by the perusal of standard works devoted to this high topic, and by a rigid and scrupulous self-examination and self-discipline, with the fundamental principles of mental and moral philosophy. They will not fail to discover from such an investigation, the great central truths of humanity—the paramount laws of being—the design, object and end of intelligent existence—the immense superiority and infinite responsibilities of the moral nature—the relation of the intel-

lectual, perceptive and sensitive faculties and organs to this nature—and the intimate connection which subsists between the external world and the human spirit—between the physical and the mental universe—between the circumstances which surround us at every stage of our earthly progress, and the corresponding duties which are devolved upon us. This examination, moreover, will teach us the absolute necessity of laying the foundations of the entire superstructure of knowledge, upon that adamant rock of virtue, goodness, truth and duty, which alone is adequate to sustain its weight, and to render it proof against the rude storms to which it must inevitably be subjected in its upward progress.

MORAL EDUCATION.

The wise and the good in every section of our land are beginning to direct their regards to the disproportionate amount of time and labor bestowed upon the cultivation of the intellectual faculties merely, to the comparative neglect of the pressing claims of a higher and nobler nature; and the conviction is daily gaining ground, that while this state of things is permitted to exist, no progress can be made in the advancement of true civilization and pure Christianity.

Science, in itself considered—divested of its influence upon the heart and the life—stripped of its connection with the useful purposes of existence—is at best a barren attainment; and the time and energies employed in its acquisition are utterly wasted if it does not become incorporated and assimilated with the moral being and contribute thereby to the sustenance and growth, the development and expansion, of the higher faculties. The ideas and conceptions of *duty*—those ideas and conceptions which form the basis of Christian morality, and are unfolded in living light and perennial beauty in the Scriptures of Truth—must first be excited and kept in constant, healthful and vigorous action. Without this, it is in vain to discipline the intellect; its fairest and most promising flowers will blossom but to fade—its richest soil will be overgrown with tares—and all its manifestations, however apparently brilliant and hopeful, will prove delusive and unreal at the first approach of those severe tests to which it must be, sooner or later, subjected. The first lessons to be impressed upon the children of our common schools should be those of moral obligation and responsibility. They should be taught in simple and intelligible language the duty of love and reverence for their creator, and unquestioning obedience and uniform respect to their parents and teachers—the necessity and beauty of order and system and harmony—of mutual kindness and affection, and of the ambition and desire to become useful members of society as they grow up to take the places allotted to them in the com-

munity. They should be taught to act on all occasions from pure and upright motives—to avoid all contaminating and evil influences and associations, either in thought, word or deed—to repress every indication of anger, malice, envy, revenge, or unkindness—to be charitable and tender to the faults of others—of a mild and forgiving spirit—a cheerful and benignant temper—full of hope, full of innocence, and an abiding consciousness of well doing. From the ever open, ever accessible pages of the book of nature, they should be daily imbued with lessons of beauty, of pervading kindliness, benevolence and love, of order and system and harmony, of usefulness and beneficence, and of all those graces and adornments which should fill up the life and constitute the enduring staple of character, of motive and of action. The morning hour which should thus be consecrated to moral culture, while it would be spent in the most agreeable and pleasant interchange of sentiments and principles, destined with many, if not with all, to take deep root in the heart and the life, and to “bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold,” would constitute a fitting preparation for the subsequent exercises of the day. The intellectual faculties would be in a better condition for that mental discipline which the acquisition of science involves: and in proportion as the practical utility and noble purposes of knowledge have been comprehended and understood, will its prosecution become pleasurable and agreeable. In this way, moral and intellectual instruction may be made to go hand in hand—the intimate and reciprocal relation between knowledge and virtue become realized—and all the energies of the expanding being directed to the attainment of a liberal and comprehensive education; an education embracing the whole nature, and in harmony with every faculty of the mind.

With regard to the culture of the intellect, and the development of the reasoning and reflecting faculties, the great aim of a teacher should be to secure a perfect understanding and an accurate conception of the ideas unfolded—a habit of close discrimination and clear deduction of facts and principles—and a rigid analysis of whatever is presented to the mind for its adoption or rejection. If master of the subject himself, in all its departments, he will find little difficulty in infusing this spirit into the minds of his pupils, and thereby accustoming them to subject to a searching and thorough scrutiny every branch of science to which they may be successively led. Innumerable sources of error will, of course, present themselves at every stage of this process; but it is frequently only by the examination and refutation of every possible manifestation of error, that the mind arrives at fundamental principles of truth; and the discipline which such an exercise, pro-

perly conducted, confers, is beyond all appreciation. The wide range afforded by the elementary principles of language, of mathematics, of natural history and philosophy, and of the mechanical powers, enables the learner, if suitable care has been had, in conducting him through these studies, to grasp the conception and familiarize himself with the details of the higher branches of science—to deal with principles—and to apply them intelligently and with promptness and facility to the practical purposes of life. For it is ever to be borne in mind, that *utility* is the great object which is always to be kept in view; and that the acquisition of mere science, like the accumulation of mere wealth, is comparatively fruitless and unavailing, unless it can be made, either immediately or ultimately, to subserve the higher and nobler purposes of existence—unless it can become instrumental to the still wider diffusion of knowledge, of happiness and of virtue.

NOTICE TO TEACHERS.

FREE INSTRUCTION IN PHONOGRAPHY.

A. F. BOYLE, of Boston, respectfully informs the teachers who intend to be present at the New-York Teachers' State Convention, which commences on Wednesday, August 19, in Utica, that he will begin a free class in Phonography, in that city, on Monday, August 17. The class will receive three lessons a day on Monday and Tuesday; and during the sitting of the convention, one a day, (from six to seven in the morning.)

Should it be desired by any considerable number of teachers, a class will be formed to receive a course of lessons, during the week following the convention.

Mr. Boyle trusts that those ladies and gentlemen who intend being present at the convention, will so arrange their affairs as to be in Utica on Saturday, August 15th, or to stay a week after the convention, and thus avail themselves of the proffered instruction in a useful art, which bids fair to obtain a speedy entrance into the schools of the U. States.

Either of the proposed courses will give a thorough knowledge of the *principles* of Phonography, with as much of the *practice* as will enable the members of the class to teach it without further oral instruction.

Mr. Boyle will be in Utica as early as the 10th of August, to secure a suitable place for the proposed classes. He may be found at the book store of Bennet, Backus & Hawley.

County superintendents, town superintendents and teachers, will please circulate this notice among the teachers in their respective neighborhoods.

"It is certain that all the evils in society arise from want of faith in God, and of obedience to his laws; and it is not less certain that by the prevalence of a lively and efficient belief, they would all be cured. If christians in any country, yea, if any collected body of them, were what they might, and ought, and are commanded to be, the universal reception of the gospel would follow as a natural and a promised result. And in a world of christians, the extinction of physical evil might be looked for, if moral evil—that is, in christian language, sin, were removed."—Robert Southey.

Communications.

[For the District School Journal.]

SCHOOL CELEBRATION IN GERMANY.

The friend of EDUCATION regards that word as expressing the best interest of Society—of the rising race especially—the society that is to be. Education in a comprehensive view of it, is an enlightened power of the State, by which, with a wise forecast, the men that *are* provide for the men that shall be, an inheritance more precious than gold or silver, than house or land; for it is the result of education which appreciates and gives value to all these. The legislation which does this, whether it be that of one man, or of many, is entitled to the gratitude and the cooperation of all those who have any stake in the community,—and who has not? We engage in this enterprise, whether we are professed teachers or not, when we pay attention to it;—when we inform ourselves what it effects in our own country, prosecuted as it is among us;—when we enquire how the actual process may be improved, and what might be done to make that which is good in *design*, good in *fact*.

The truly good man rejoices in the good of all that live.—Moral good seen in the life of humanity; public good fostered by the fathers of the community, and germinating in the children, through the influence of the former, is a spectacle that higher natures than the human might rejoice in. We read with pleasure of all the provisions made any where to snatch poor human nature from low animalism, and intended to make of advancing intelligence, a social and sympathetic interest. It was with such a sentiment that I read a short narrative written by Sir Francis Head, formerly governor of Canada, in which he describes a little school celebration that he witnessed in Germany, in 1832. It may be interesting to Americans generally, and will perhaps be instructive to the juvenile reader of the Journal, because he will learn from it how kindly the children in Germany are cared for, and how they enjoy the innocent festivals connected with their education.

The small principality called the duchy of Nassau, contains about 356,000 inhabitants. These are Protestants and Catholics, Mennonists and Jews. Of these last, the number is nearly six thousand. "The duke of Nassau is the cacique, king, emperor, or commander-in-chief of the province; and people there are everlastingly talking of the Duke as in other countries they talk of the sun, the moon, or any other luminary of which there exists but one in their system." Now let us enquire whether the children have any reason to like the Duke. Sir Francis Head says, in his very entertaining book, 'Bubbles from the Brunnen,'* that all the children in Nassau from six to fourteen years of age, are obliged to go to school by order of the Duke, and that they are instructed in reading, writing, scripture history, their native language, some parts of natural history, geography and arithmetic.

It appears that school learning has long been known to the people of Nassau, for the English traveller was present when a village school quitted the old school house to take possession of a new one. An old building—so called—is generally much older in the old countries than an old one in the United States. Houses and public buildings are rarely of wood; they are constructed generally of stone, or of mortar between timbers, and fre-

* Lest young readers should not know the meaning of this title, they shall be informed that it signifies Bubbles from the Spring. He visited certain medicinal springs in the duchy of Nassau.

quently are in good preservation when the date, in great figures in a conspicuous place on the outside, assures us that the edifice has stood for centuries.

THE NEW SCHOOL HOUSE.—The village of Langen-Schwalbach, in the duchy of Nassau, contains abundance of mineral springs, which are visited by people from all parts of Germany. Schwalbach signifies the Swallow's stream, and Langen is long in German. "One morning," says the author, "during breakfast, I observed several little children passing my window in their best clothes. The boys wore a sort of green sash of oak-leaves, which, coming over the right shoulder, crossed the back and breast, and then carried round the waist, hung in two ends on the left side. The girls, dressed in white, had roses in their hair, and held green garlands in their hands.

"On enquiring the reason of the children being dressed in this way, I learned that there was to be a great festival and procession, to celebrate the taking possession of a new school house, which, built by the town, was just completed. Accordingly, following some of the little ones down the main street, I passed this village seminary, whose first birth-day was about to be commemorated. It was a substantial building, consisting of a centre with two square wings. Wreaths of oak-leaves were suspended in front, and long verdant garlands of the same tree hung in festoons from one wing to the other. It was impossible to contrast the size of this building with the small houses in its neighborhood, without feeling how creditable it was to the inhabitants of this little town to appropriate a portion of the money drawn from strangers, to this sensible and patriotic object.

"After passing this new seminary I continued descending the main street about one hundred yards, which brought me to a crowd of people standing before the old school house, into the door of which, creeping under the arms of the grown persons, child after child hurried and disappeared, like bees going into their hive.

"The old school house of Langen-Schwalbach, is one of the most ancient buildings in the town. The wooden framework consists of beams bent in every direction, and curiously carved. On the front wall there are several inscriptions, such as '*Ora et labora*, 1552;' and then again a sentence in German dated 1643, describing that in that year the house was repaired. Though all the parts of this ancient edifice are very rude, they are so arranged as to make a venerable and pleasing appearance.

"I observed that no one entered this door but the children. However, as in this civil country great privileges are granted to strangers, I ascended an old rattle-trap staircase, until, coming to a landing-place, I found one large room on my left full of little boys, and on my right another overflowing with little girls; these two rooms composing the whole of the building.

"On the landing place I met the three masters, all very respectfully dressed. The Senior was about forty years of age; the two others were well-looking young men of about twenty-six. One of these, to my astonishment, addressed me in English. He spoke the language well, and said he could read it with ease. During the long evenings of winter, aided by the conversation of an Englishman sojourning in the place, he had actually taught himself a foreign language.

"He seemed to be acquainted with English authors, and talked sensibly about the institutions of England; in short he evidently knew more of England than England knows of Nassau; or many larger portions of the globe. He informed me that the school was composed of 150 boys and about as many

girls. Of these children, 180 were Protestants, 90 were Catholics, and the remainder were Jews. Having witnessed the prejudice and hatred with which Christians and Jews mutually regard each other in many countries, I was surprised and gratified at this exhibition of toleration.

"The tutor at length offered to show me the children, and we worked our way into the boy's room. It was a pretty sight to witness such an assemblage of little fellows, with clean shining faces, and the oak leaves gave a freshness to the scene that was very delightful.

"Among these white-haired laddies it was quite unnecessary to enquire which were the Jew boys, for there each stood, as distinctly marked as their race is all over the globe. The chamber full of little girls, would have pleased any body, so nicely were they dressed, and so well-behaved were they. The garlands they held in their hands, the wreaths of roses that bloomed on their heads, and the smiles that beamed on their faces, formed as pretty a mixture of the animal and vegetable creation as could well be imagined. In one corner stood the only Jewish girl in the room; not Rebecca herself could have had a handsomer nose, a pair of brighter eyes, or a more marked expression of countenance.

"All of a sudden a signal was given for the children to descend, and it then became quite as much as the three masters could do, to make them go out of the room hand-in-hand. Down scrambled first the boys, and then more quietly followed the little girls, though not without one or two screams proceeding from those who in their hurry had dropped their garlands. One of these I picked up, and seeing a little girl crying, I gave it to her; and no balm of Gilead ever worked so sudden a cure, for away she ran, and joined her comrades laughing.

"After the children the masters descended, and we followed them into the street, where the civil authorities, and almost all the parents of the children had assembled. With some difficulty the children were arranged exactly in front of the school house. When this was done, the mayor, two Catholic ministers, two Protestant clergymen, and the three masters, facing the children, saluting each other for a short time, engaged in a little conversation together. At length, the mayor giving a signal, all put on the attitude of expectation, and the youngest of the Lutheran ministers advancing began an address to the children.

"What he said I did not stand near enough to hear, but his face beamed with the benevolent smile with which any man of feeling might regard so youthful an audience. The little creatures, however, seemed less inclined to listen to the minister than to proceed to the new school house. In one respect I must own I was disappointed; the burden of the discourse must have been entirely on the advantages of the new house, for I particularly remarked that the speaker never pointed to the old one. Not a single eye was directed towards that. None but myself seemed to feel any regret that it was about to lose the importance it had so long enjoyed.

"I could not help feeling for the old edifice, and when the discourse was ended, when hats had returned to people's heads, and when the procession had begun to move, I could not for some time take my eyes off the old fabric. The date of 1552 expressed that these walls had for nearly three hundred years been enlivened with the youthful voices of successive generations, and there was something affecting in the fact that they were about to be forsaken. The old hive was deserted,—the bees had swarmed—had already hovered in

the air, and to their new abode had flown away. I proceeded with the crowd, repeating to myself—

'Let others hail the rising sun,
I bow to him whose course is run.'

"As soon as the children had reached the new house, a band which was awaiting their arrival, struck up; and in the open air they instantly sung a hymn. The doors were then thrown open, and they all in high glee scrambled up the stairs. The mayor, the ministers, and masters having followed the children, a great rush was made by parents and spectators.

"As soon as order was established, and silence obtained, two of the clergymen—the first a Catholic and the second the Lutheran already mentioned, each made a brief address for the occasion, and the children sang a concluding hymn. The mayor made a bow, the ceremony was at an end, and all returned to the fresh air.

"Hearing that the children would conclude their festivity with a dance, and a supper, I took a short walk in the mean time, and returned to their entertainment at four o'clock. I was too late. The remains of cakes and fruit were scattered over two long tables and the children were dispersed. But I was graciously welcomed and was offered a seat. The children were too well satisfied to enjoy dancing, but disposed themselves in groups about the school room, seeming to be as happy as possible. Sometimes the boys amused themselves with a singing game, which contained as much laughter as music. The girls had their song. While they were thus enjoying the delightful occasion I departed, reflecting that nothing is cheaper than innocent pleasure. I firmly believe that the whole festival I have described—roses, oak-leaves, garlands, festoons, cakes, and apples, altogether, did not cost the town of Langen-Schwabach ten shillings! Nevertheless, in its history the opening of a public establishment so useful to future generations, and so creditable to the present one, was an event of no inconsiderable importance."

E. R.

[For the District School Journal.]

SUGGESTIONS TO TRUSTEES.

For the district schools of New-York, more than thirty thousand trustees are acting, unrewarded by the people and almost unnoticed by those who write or speak in behalf of schools.

It is pleasant to find citizens thus engaged in promoting the present and prospective welfare of community, without a thought of fee or reward.

Perhaps the following suggestions will be useful to young men who may be unexpectedly appointed school trustees.

1. If you cannot retain your present teacher, be prompt in obtaining his successor.

Instead of waiting "Till somebody comes along that will teach pretty reasonable," it is well to employ a new teacher before his predecessor will be discharged. This will enable you to say when the school will re-open, and parents can make suitable and timely preparations for the attendance of their children; the house may be repaired, the new teacher will have an opportunity to visit his future pupils in their school, and of learning their names and something of their present standing and classification in school. If you speak in time you may commonly get the man of your choice, and remember, it is much safer to employ a good teacher whom you know than a stranger, though ever so well recommended.

2. Examine the teacher.

This work is occasionally left to men who feel little or no interest in your school, and who after

asking, it may be five or six questions, grant a certificate. But you have a right to be satisfied in regard to his fitness for one of the most difficult and responsible callings that a human being can assume. You will ask—Are his age, experience, and literary qualifications sufficient? Is he patient, firm, punctual, faithful and conscientious? Does he possess much of the teacher's spirit? Does he teach because he loves the work of a teacher?

He will be a model—an every day copy and companion for your children. Are his habits, opinions, and principles, such as you desire your children to learn?

3. Co-operate with the teacher.

This will give him the confidence and authority so essential to happiness and success in his work, and unruly boys and unreasonable parents will then find that he is not a hireling or a friendless stranger who may be imposed upon and banished unheard. Perhaps the teacher is young, far from friends, and just entering upon a work of untold trial and difficulty; now, a little sympathy, a few words of kindness and encouragement, would be to him as cool waters to a thirsty soul—would do more to promote his health and usefulness than money or medicine.

4. Procure a library for the teacher.

This is advisable, because many school text-books are mere "Introductions" or "Compenda," and if the teacher would render recitations profitable and interesting, he must have access to complete works on the several topics of instruction.

A library is justly considered indispensable to the professional man; and, certainly, those who are expected to educate the women of the nation, as well as the men of all professions, should not be destitute of a suitable collection of books.

It is thought that a few books, well selected and well studied, would so much add to the pleasure, success and reputation of the instructor, that an early separation of teacher and pupils would be mutually avoided.

A small collection might be purchased, and considered as a part of the District library; but there are thousands of teachers who cannot afford, out of their \$6 or \$10 a month, to purchase what will benefit others as much as themselves, and what, as a part of the necessary tools, should be furnished by the employers.

CYRUS HOLLEY.

State Normal School.

The Teacher.

ELOCUTION.

THE committee of the Albany City and County Lyceum, to whom was referred the subject of Elocution, respectfully submit the following report:—

Your committee think that there is no science whose claims to public attention have been so generally neglected as have those of elocution. Proposing, as it does, to teach us the right use of speech, that exponent of reason, man's high prerogative, we may well wonder that so small a proportion of those called *learned*, should be acquainted even with its fundamental principles. But, we must consider that, although practised as an art since the early days of Grecian history, it has never till within the last few years, occupied a place on the platform of scientific knowledge. Indeed, a large portion of the community behold in it nothing but "the strolling player's art" to captivate the ignorant, and "split the ears of the groundlings." We must confess that some good cause for the entertainment of this erroneous opi-

nion has been afforded by the conduct of certain *professed* elocutionists, whose itinerating labors have availed to procure for the subject, in some places, a notoriety which is any thing but desirable. This class of *professors* embraces a motley crew of broken down actors, unfledged aspirants after histrionic fame, worthless pretenders, destitute of knowledge, genius or sense, and unmitigated vagabonds of every name, condition and class, whose chief recommendation to popular favor is consummate impudence, skillfully covered by stereotyped forms of heartless civility. If we had, as an offset to these, a large corps of skillful teachers of elocution, the public mind would soon be disabused of the false impressions made upon it by their contemptible displays of rant and bombast. But such is not the case; and we must submit to the present state of things, with what grace we may, for a little, though it is to be hoped, a very little longer.

One of the chief obstacles to the introduction of this branch of knowledge into our academies and schools, arises from a prejudice which prevails extensively against the systematic culture of the voice, on the assumed ground that it tends to produce that style of speaking, or rather of *mouthing*, which is so apparent among those who either consider themselves good speakers, or would have others consider them as such; and whose manner is termed by way of reproach "theatrical." Nothing is farther from the truth, nothing more unjust than this. True, a little vocal cultivation, like "a little learning, is a dangerous thing;" but let the practice be persisted in, and all appearance of stiffness will eventually subside.

The advantages of good reading and speaking are too manifest to require comment: the only question is how these accomplishments shall be acquired. Elocution presents a method by which this end may be attained, and the voice be brought under the absolute control of the will. It finds us slaves to numerous bad habits, from whose dominion it offers to emancipate us; not by delivering us from all restraint, but by bringing us under a good and proper regimen.

It finds most of us possessed of a style of delivery unnatural and forced; and it endeavors to bring us back to the simple beauty and grace exhibited in the accents of the *little child*, whose tones and gestures are as uncorrupted as the thoughts they shadow forth are lovely and pure.

It proposes to teach us the elements of speech separately, and how to combine them into words. It shows us in what manner we may best learn to enunciate those words distinctly. It tells us, when those words are aggregated into a sentence, how to read that sentence so as to convey to the hearer the idea which it is intended to communicate. It treats of tones, accent, emphasis, inflections; it tells of gestures appropriate to the sentiments; of postures, favorable and unfavorable for vocal delivery; and indeed of every thing that goes to constitute the chaste reader or the finished orator.

But objections are interposed to all this by a class of persons who affect to consider it as tending to produce an artificial or overstrained style of delivery. These have much to say about "following nature" and disregarding rules. They are particularly careful to denounce every attempt at rhetorical effect as "*theatrical*;" a term to which they thus unwittingly attribute a meaning which they never intended it should have.

The idea of "following nature" and "disregarding rules," appears, at the first blush, to be very plausible. It commends itself readily to those minds which move only as they are urged by the latest impulse, and which arrive at general con-

clusions by the consideration of isolated circumstances. It has held absolute sway over the popular mind from time immemorial, without producing any other result than that of discouraging those who, but for its influence, would have been correct readers and speakers. Those few orators who have proved themselves worthy of the name, have made themselves what they were *in spite of* public opinion, and not by its aid.

But if the principle referred to be correct in this application of it, it will be equally so in all others. Let us try it, and see how far it will bear the test of rigid scrutiny. If the speaker may discard rules in the delivery of his discourse, he may also in the composition of it. Grammar and rhetoric will not embarrass less in the one case than elocution in the other. But who ever thinks of making a finished composition by disregarding the laws of composition?

The argument urged against the study of elocution will apply equally well to music. If nature, unassisted, can make a race of good orators, she can as easily produce a chorus of accomplished singers. Then Malibran, Incledon and Braham were as unwise in devoting their best years to the study of the theory and practice of music, as Demosthenes and Cicero had been in cultivating the graces of oratory.

Look now at natural chirography, and what do you behold? What but a conglomeration of "turkey tracks"! And are these the means of intercommunication between man and man? If so, what ideas do they represent? Is the child sent to school that he may be exercised in the art of making scrawls and blots, or that he may rather be taught to make intelligible signs instead of them? It is passing strange that men who pride themselves on their good sense, should be so ready to stultify themselves by exercising it in regard to some subjects, and laying it wholly aside in respect to others!

But we are told that rules tend only to embarrass the speaker. We ask, in reply, why should they do so in the performance of one kind of operation more than another? Time was when the builder knew no other method of composing his framework than that of cutting each piece of timber as near to the requisite size as he could guess, and then trying it to see whether it would fit the place it was intended to occupy. If found to be too large, it was cut again and tried once more, and if it were then ascertained to be too small, there was no alternative left but to adapt it to some other part, or to throw it away. Were buildings erected in that manner *more or less* commodious than those we now occupy? They were constructed according to the *natural* method, and ought of course to have been far better than the *artificial* mansions of modern times.

No science abounds in rules more than that of music; particularly that department of it which relates to composition. Would a composer possessed of common sense send forth a production in which the notes were placed at random? Surely not. He knows that he must do every thing by rule, or the parts will not harmonize. It would be absurd then for him to reject the only means he has of obtaining the desired end. The same is true in regard to men in every profession, trade or occupation. They cannot succeed unless they act upon fixed principles. Show me a skillful workman in any of the arts, a successful merchant in any kind of business, a prosperous farmer, a thrifty housekeeper, an ingenious artist, or a respectable professional man, and you point me to one who uses system in all his operations—who does every thing *by rule*. It is not true that the speaker who is thoroughly

versed in elocution is impeded in his discourse by the instructions imparted by that science. Elocution professes not so much to give specific directions as to form good habits. It bids us attend strictly to rules while acquiring those habits; and when we speak or read in public, *to forget all art*, and throw ourselves upon the inspiration of our theme, trusting to the discipline to which our vocal powers have been subjected for all the aid we need in giving our thoughts the right kind of expression. He who does this, cannot fail to interest his audience; who will be far enough from considering him as "too artificial" or "affected." That "the perfection of art consists in disguising art," is a truism never better applied than to the subject under consideration. The speaker who *appears to labor* in pronouncing a discourse, thereby shows plainly that he needs, not *less* practice in elocutionary exercises, but more.

On the other hand, the *good orator* is one who, in every variety of diction so adapts the sound to the sense, and his *action* to both, that you are forced to forget the speaker in the interest you feel in his subject. Such an one knows how to spread the coloring, and intermingle the light and shade, so that those who behold the picture can never think of the artist's hand, so deeply are they absorbed in the delightful images that he causes to pass and repass before them. He may have studied upon his oration for weeks or months, he may have weighed every word, and considered every tone, every accent, now choosing one, then refusing another; and yet you will scarcely suspect this to be the case, with so much skill does he manage that most perfect of all instruments, the human voice.

Contrast, now, with this imperfect description of *what a speaker should be*, the scenes presented in a school room where the scholars are taught to read in a "natural manner." There is one boy who stammers, and here is another that lisps; a third has a nasal twang; a fourth is possessed of a blunt, coarse voice; a fifth of a high, squeaking one, and a sixth exhibits a deep guttural tone. Among them all there is a great variety, but they all have the "natural" style. Now, if we could determine which among them is endowed most largely with the element of "nature," we might raise a standard to which the gaze of all who aspire after excellence, should be directed.

But we must hasten to a close. Oratory is one of the most important arts, or rhetoric would not have been one among the earliest sciences. It is too late now to say any thing in disparagement of elocution. He who does so at this day, subjects himself to the charge of wilful ignorance. Its introduction into our schools is the point that our association is called upon to consider. Convinced, as we are, of its immense importance to the rising generation, it becomes us to speak with a *full, clear voice*, in *decisive tones*, and *unfaltering accents*, our sentiments on this subject. To this end your committee beg leave to introduce the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the principles of elocution as set forth in Dr. Rush's admirable treatise on the human voice, are deserving our most serious attention as instructors of the rising generation.

Resolved, That elocution should be a branch of study in all our schools and colleges: and that in all the latter, professorships of elocution ought to be established.

Resolved, That while we would not undervalue the labors of any who are endeavoring to disseminate a knowledge of this most useful science, we consider that the thanks of community are especially due to Dr. Jonathan Barber and Dr. An-

drew Comstock, as the pioneers in the great work of elucidating and adapting to the popular mind, the principles contained in Rush's "Philosophy of the Human Voice."

C. H. ANTHONY,
W. L. MARTIN,
S. SWEET. } *Committee.*

[To the editor of the District School Journal.]

HAGUE, Warren county, June 30, 1846.

Dear Sir:

This day has been a glorious one for old Hague. The people here are awaking to the importance of a movement and effort in behalf of our common schools. By an arrangement with Dr. Holton of Essex, a school celebration was held here to day, which was well attended both by the schools and the inhabitants, and promises to be productive of the happiest results.

Dr. Holton's address was well received, and contained many happy allusions to the embarrassments clinging to our schools, resulting from the indifference of the inhabitants.

This is the first of a series of school celebrations to be held in the county, and its success augurs well for the future.

Yours, truly,

A. W. HOLDEN.

THINK.—Tohught engenders thought. Place one idea upon paper, another will follow it, and still another, until you have written a page. You cannot fathom your mind. There is a well of thought there which has no bottom. The more you draw from it, the more clear and fruitful it will be. If you neglect to think yourself, and use other people's thoughts—giving them utterance only—you will never know what you are capable of. At first, your ideas come out in lumps—homely and shapeless—but no matter—time and perseverance will arrange and polish them. Learn to think and you will soon learn to write; and the more you think the better will you express your ideas.

Poetry.

A GOLDEN RULE.

One appeal to God above,
Supplicating for his love
Daily offer. Peace of mind
Makes the happy, good, and kind.

Daily sing one cheerful song,
From the bosom's fiery throng;
Daily do one noble deed;
Daily sow one blessing's seed.

Daily make one foe thy friend;
Daily from thy surplus spend;
Daily, when the gift is thine,
Write one verse in strains divine.

Daily seek kind nature's face:
Daily seek for some new grace;
Daily dry one sufferer's tear,
Daily one grieved brother cheer.

Daily drink from sparkling eye
Sweeter rapture; soar on high!
Then thy life will know no night,
And thy death be robbed in light.

TERMS.

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